DESCRIPTION

An official journal of the The Royal Society for Public Health and a sister journal of Public Health in Practice.

Public Health is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short reports on all aspects of the science, philosophy, and practice of public health.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver public health services and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of public health programmes, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

Published twelve times a year, Public Health considers submissions on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings.

These include:
- Public health practice and impact
- Applied Epidemiology
- Need or impact assessments
- Health service effectiveness, management and re-design
- Health Protection including control of communicable diseases
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
- Public health governance, audit and quality
- Public health law and ethics
- Public health policy and comparisons
- Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the Editors will consider articles on any issue relating to public health.

Public Health also publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.
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GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

INTRODUCTION

Aims
Public Health is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short communications on all aspects of the science, philosophy and practice of public health.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver public health services and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of public health programmes, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

Scope
Public Health considers submissions on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings. These include:

- Public health practice and impact
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- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
- Public health governance, audit and quality
- Public health law and ethics
- Public health policy and comparisons
- Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the Editors will consider articles on any issue relating to the health of populations or the public.

Reviews and Supplements
Public Health publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.

Organizations or individuals who wish to present proposals for supplements should contact the Editors at public.health@rsph.org.uk for a copy of the specific guidance on the publication of supplements.

Impact on Practice
Papers describing original research impacting on public health practice are particularly encouraged. Those describing a particular event (e.g. an outbreak of infectious disease) should be submitted as soon as possible. Fast track publication of suitable articles is possible; please contact the Editorial Office regarding this.

Papers are invited from anywhere in the world, and so authors are asked to ensure that sufficient context is provided for all readers to appreciate their contribution.

Types of paper
The types of papers that may be considered for inclusion are:
1) Original research, including evaluations of public health interventions or programmes, and public health practice original work on audit, workforce or resource development (see section 4.2);
2) Short communications (see section 4.3) and;
3) Review papers, which include meta-analysis and systematic review (see section 4.4)

We also consider the following papers:
1) Letters (see section 4.5);
2) Celebrating Public Health Lives: biographical articles about named individuals, living or deceased, who have made a special contribution to public health (see section 4.6).
We welcome student papers and encourage students to publish their work, e.g. originating from practice-based research, which will be subject to constructive peer review process.

On submission, authors should indicate in which category their contribution is to be considered. If authors are uncertain of the category to which their paper is best suited, they should make this clear in their covering letter to the Editors.

You may wish to consider referring to the Equator guidelines http://www.equator-network.org/, when submitting your paper.

**Submission process**

Papers submitted to Public Health are carefully reviewed in the first instance by one of the Editors. Papers that do not meet editorial needs; are methodically flawed; or lack originality will be rejected. We will also reject papers that fail to provide sufficient ethical approval where required (see section 9.3) and we shall refer papers back for revision prior to any review if they do not comply with Journal style.

Papers which pass the Editorial review will be sent out to peer-review and will be reviewed by at least two external reviewers (short communications will only be sent to one reviewer). Reviewers are asked to consider whether the paper: contains new research findings or information; is relevant to public health practice, is technically sound; and is suitably presented.

1. **How to submit your manuscript**

All manuscripts should be submitted online at http://ees.elsevier.com/puhe/ by clicking on the 'submit paper' link. Authors will first need to register their details, and can then submit their paper. Any author unable to submit online should contact the Editorial Office at public.health@rsph.org.uk.

2. **Correspondence**

The official language of Public Health is British English. Support may be made available to overseas authors whose first language is not English.

Any correspondence (including books for review) should be sent to the Editorial Office as follows:

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The Royal Society for Public Health
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E1 8AN
Tel: +44 (0)20 3177 1632
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BEFORE YOU BEGIN
Ethics in publishing
Please see our information pages on Ethics in publishing and Ethical guidelines for journal publication.

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Public Health is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), for more information please visit http://publicationethics.org

Papers describing research including human subjects will not be considered if ethical approval has not been sought.

Work on human beings that is submitted to Public Health should comply with the principles laid down in the Declaration of Helsinki; Recommendations guiding physicians in biomedical research involving human subjects. Adopted by the 18th World Medical Assembly, Helsinki, Finland, June 1964, amended by the 29th World Medical Assembly, Tokyo, Japan, October 1975, the 35th World Medical Assembly, Venice, Italy, October 1983, and the 41st World Medical Assembly, Hong Kong, September 1989.

The manuscript should contain a statement that the work has been approved by the appropriate ethical committees related to the institution(s) in which it was performed and that subjects gave informed consent to the work.

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Funding: None
Competing interests: None declared
Ethical approval: Not required (please add a brief explanation as to why ethical approval was not needed for this study).

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Authorship
All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

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Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrollment, randomization, withdrawal and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure. The CONSORT checklist and template flow diagram are available online.

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Registration in a public trials registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal in accordance with International Committee of Medical Journal Editors recommendations. Trials must register at or before the onset of patient enrolment. The clinical trial registration number should be included at the end of the abstract of the article. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Health-related interventions include any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome (for example drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, dietary interventions, and process-of-care changes). Health outcomes include any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants, including pharmacokinetic measures and adverse events. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

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It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the Guide to Publishing with Elsevier). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

**Article structure**

**4.2 Original research, including evaluation papers**

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Papers should be clear, precise and logical and should not normally exceed 3,000 words.

Original research papers should be set out as follows:

- **Covering letter**—the letter must contain: why the submission is appropriate for publication in Public Health; what is known about the topic discussed; what your study adds; and confirmation that the paper has not been published elsewhere.
- **Title page**—bearing title, all authors' initials, surname, main degrees (two only) and the name and location of the institution(s) where the work was done. The author to whom proofs and correspondence should be sent should be clearly indicated with correct address, e-mail, telephone and fax details.
- **Abstract.** This should be structured under the following headings:
  - Objectives
  - Study design
  - Methods
  - Results
  - Conclusions
- **Keywords.** 3–6 keywords should follow the abstract
- **Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
• Acknowledgements including declarations: Statements of ethical approval, funding and competing interests (see section 9)
• References (see section 10)

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Tables and figures

Tables and figures should be kept to a minimum. Tables must be comprehensible without reference to the text if possible. References can be cited in the tables if needed. Authors should indicate at approximately what point in the text the table should appear. Figures, graphs, drawings etc. should not be over complex and must be intelligible when reduced in size for printing. They should be on separate sheets, numbered and with legends.

Tables

Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text. Place footnotes to tables below the table body and indicate them with superscript lowercase letters. Avoid vertical rules. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in tables do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article.

4.3 Short communications

A short communication is preferred for the submission of important preliminary observations or data that does not warrant publication as a full paper. Short communications should be approximately 500-1500 words in length and provide adequate information to allow for the same peer review given to other submissions.
• A structured abstract will be required during the online submission process.
• Keywords will also be required. However, specific sections, such as Methods, should not be used in the manuscript itself.
• A short communication can include one table or figure and up to 10 references. Preliminary data published as a short communication will not preclude subsequent publication of more complete results if the work is significantly expanded.

4.4 Review papers

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Systematic Review papers presenting exhaustive, critical assessments of the published literature on relevant public health topics or questions will be considered. Such reviews should be prepared in strict compliance with MOOSE or PRISMA guidelines or with Cochrane's complementary guidelines for systematic reviews of health promotion and public health interventions, as appropriate. Public Health encourages authors to use alternative databases covering scientific literature from low- and middle-income countries not indexed in the traditional international databases (i.e. Medline, Web of Science). All systematic reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement of which guideline has been used in the preparation of the review.

Narrative Review papers will be considered by Public Health. Whilst no formal guidelines for such reviews exist, authors should be very clear in what criteria they have used for the selection of studies and describe the methods used to undertake the review in the body of the paper. Generally speaking, narrative reviews will only be considered where the author(s) are clearly experts in the research field under consideration or the public health issue under consideration is not amenable to systematic review. The reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement justifying the appropriateness of undertaking a narrative review.

Review papers should not exceed 3000 words. They should include a Structured Abstract: Tables/ Illustrations can be included up to a maximum of 5, though larger tables may be included only on the electronic version of the paper.

References: up to a maximum of 100.
4.5 Letters
Readers are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editors and these can include responses to previously published papers or original data.

Authors will be given the opportunity to comment and respond to any correspondence we intend to include in the `Letters to the Editors' regarding their previously published manuscript.

4.6 Celebrating Public Health Lives
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Papers should be clear, precise and logical and should not normally exceed 1,500 words in length.

An abstract is not required and specific sections, such as methods, discussion etc, should not be used.

Keywords are not required.

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Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).
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Electronic artwork

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